



LEAGUE OF NEBRASKA MUNICIPALITIES

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August 12, 2005

Andy Pollock, Executive Director
Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 94927
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-8932

Re: Application No. 911-014/PI-99

Dear Mr. Pollock:

The League of Nebraska Municipalities appreciates the Commission's opening of this docket to give us the opportunity to comment on these important issues. There are several areas of concern to municipalities regarding landline 911 and enhanced wireless 911 service that we would like to address.

We would like to thank the Commission and your staff for your work on the wireless E 911 program. Your staff has been very helpful and accessible when dealing with us on these matters.

We support the consolidation of public safety answering points (PSAP) where appropriate and applaud those local governments that have made joint efforts in this area. Joint action and consolidation create efficiencies and can provide cost savings. The Legislature has given incentives to local governments who work together in areas such as the restricted fund budget lid, levy limits, and, during the last legislative session, facilities construction under Laws 2005, LB 217. Offering incentives to consolidate PSAP functions is desirable. Any plan or regulation to encourage consolidation must recognize that there are situations where distance or other factors hinder or preclude consolidation and those entities must still be accommodated.

The suspension of Phase I and Phase II implementations is understandable in light of the Legislature's concerns, but it is important that implementation continue as soon as possible. Continuation of funding for E 911 for those applicants who have already made efforts to consolidate should be considered. Along with this, discussions need to continue with the Legislature about additional funding for wireless E 911.

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One of the major issues facing local governments under this docket is the reduction in revenue from landline 911 surcharges. Many cities and villages have reported that this revenue, which is used to fund 911 systems to respond to public safety incidents, is significantly decreasing. This appears to be because of the rapid increase in the use of wireless phones that replace or are used instead of landline phones. Wireless phone users do not pay for basic 911 systems although an increasing number of the 911 calls come from wireless phones. We would like to explore ways to maintain revenue to support 911 systems, including looking at wireless phones for some sort of support.

Sincerely,

Gary G. Krumland
Assistant Director/Legal Counsel